

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

**206-296-4774** Fax 206-296-4803

TTY Relay: 711

[www.kingcounty.gov/health](http://www.kingcounty.gov/health)

**Health Advisory: Ebola Virus Update and Screening Guidance for Healthcare Providers, 7 October 2014**

**Action requested:**

- **Healthcare providers should increase their vigilance in inquiring about a history of travel to Ebola-affected areas in West Africa in the 21 days before illness onset for any patient presenting with fever or other symptoms consistent with Ebola.**
  - See screening tools at links in references, below.
- **Take a travel history for travel to an EBOLA AFFECTED AREA in West Africa (currently parts of Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone – see CDC site for current affected areas) in the 21 days before symptom onset.**
- **Isolate patients who report a travel history to an Ebola-affected country (currently Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea) and who are exhibiting Ebola symptoms in a private room with a private bathroom and implement standard, contact, and droplet precautions (gowns, facemask, eye protection, and gloves); and**
- **Immediately notify Public Health at 206-296-4774**
- **Be aware that there is NO single designated healthcare facility for Ebola virus cases in King County.**
- **All healthcare facilities should be prepared to evaluate and safely manage cases of suspected Ebola virus disease. If such a case presents in an outpatient facility not affiliated with a hospital, Public Health will work to assist in facilitating transport to the nearest appropriate facility if necessary**

**Background:** The first known case of Ebola with illness onset and laboratory confirmation in the United States occurred in Dallas, Texas, on September 2014, in a traveler from Liberia. Ebola infection is associated with fever of greater than 38.6°C or 101.5°F, and additional symptoms such as severe headache, muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or unexplained hemorrhage. Ebola is spread through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes) with blood or body fluids (including but not limited to urine, saliva, feces, vomit, sweat, breast milk, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola or contact with objects (such as needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with these fluids. Ebola is not spread through the air or water. The main source for spread is human-to-human transmission. Avoiding contact with infected persons (as well as potentially infected corpses) and their blood and body fluids is of paramount importance. Persons are not contagious before they are symptomatic. The incubation period (the time from exposure until onset of symptoms) is typically 8-10 days, but can range from 2-21 days. Additional information is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>.

**Early recognition is critical to controlling the spread of Ebola virus**, and all healthcare providers and facilities (inpatient and ambulatory care) should be familiar with and implement screening for Ebola cases in their practice setting as appropriate. **Consequently, healthcare personnel should elicit the patient's travel history and consider the possibility of Ebola in patients who present with fever, myalgia, severe headache, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, or unexplained bleeding or bruising. Should the patient report a history of recent travel to one of the affected West African countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea) and exhibit such symptoms, immediate action should be taken.**

NOTE: Harborview Medical Center (HMC) has indicated to the US Department of State that it is willing to accept and treat US Ebola patients being evacuated from West Africa and transported directly to HMC by Medevac flight and pre-arranged EMS ground transportation. HMC is NOT the designated regional Ebola treatment facility for other suspected or confirmed Ebola virus cases that are identified at other healthcare facilities in King County.

The CDC Ebola algorithm for the evaluation of a returned traveler and the checklist for evaluation of a patient being evaluated for Ebola and other key resources are available at <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/index.html>

**Resources**

- **Public Health Ebola resources (with links to CDC)**  
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/communicable/diseases/ebola.aspx>
- **CDC – Ebola affected areas**, <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html#areas>
- **CDC Ebola resources for Healthcare providers**, <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/hcp/index.html>